

Here is the bottom line: I am not willing to tell the parents of my State that I sat by and did nothing. I am not willing to dismiss child exploitation as just some conspiracy theory. I am not willing to abandon the victims of this crime to their own devices and say: Good luck to you.

No, I am not willing to do that—nor am I willing to excuse Judge Jackson's record of leniency that does need to be corrected. She should not have had the discretion to sentence leniently in the extreme, as she did, nor should any judge in America, in my view. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. We should fix it for everybody across the board, and we can begin by acting as we did in 2003.

So I am disappointed, but I can't say that I am surprised that this measure has been objected to today. All I can say is that I pledge to my constituents—I pledge to the parents of my State and, yes, to the victims of my State—that I will continue to come to this floor and that I will continue to seek passage of this act until we get action from this Senate to protect children and to punish child pornographers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, after 27 minutes of debate on the floor of the Senate, the Senator now believes we are prepared to change the law that has been debated for decades. He has put in a bill introduced 7 days ago. It has been 7 days he has had passion for this issue—enough to introduce legislation.

If you want to take on a serious issue, take it on seriously, and that means doing the homework on it. Yes, have a hearing. Of course, have a hearing. We want to make sure the people from the Sentencing Commission and others are part of this conversation. It isn't just a matter of throwing charges out against a nominee.

If you want to be serious about it, then admit the obvious: In 70 to 80 percent of cases involving child sexual abuse material, Federal judges struggle with the same sentencing that we have set down. In light of Supreme Court decisions, we understand—I ask for order, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There was no response to begin with to the Senator, so let's move forward.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I will say, as far as I am concerned, this is a serious matter that should be taken seriously. You don't become an expert by, 7 days ago, introducing a bill and saying: I have got it. Don't change a word of it. Make it the law of the land. Make it apply to every court in the land.

No. We are going to do this seriously. We are going to do it the right way, and we are going to tackle an issue that has been avoided for more than two decades, when you look at the history of it.

I find this reprehensible—the pornography, this exploitation of children—and there are no excuses whatsoever, but I am not going to do this in a slipshod, make-a-headline manner. We are going to do it in a manner that is serious, one in which we work with prosecutors, defenders, judges, and the Sentencing Commission, and get it right. It is time to get it right.

We wrote this law some 19 years ago, before the internet was as prevalent in society as it is today. Let us be mindful of that as we attack this problem and address it in a fashion that is befitting the Senate and the Senate Judiciary Committee.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, the Senator from Illinois says that Congress hasn't acted in two decades; that is true. I haven't been here for two decades; he has.

There is no excuse to not take action now. There is no excuse to not act on this problem when we know what the solution is.

So, listen, if the Senator is saying today, if he is committing today, to holding hearings and marking up a bill to toughen the child pornography laws, to make mandatory the sentencing guidelines, that is fantastic. I will take him at his word. I look forward to seeing those hearings noticed and to seeing that markup noticed, and I hope it will be forthcoming.

I am here to make a prediction. I think we will be waiting a very long time, because let's not forget what his party and the Sentencing Commission, stacked with members of his party, have been recommending. It has not been to make child sentences tougher—child pornography sentences tougher. They have wanted to make them weaker.

What the Sentencing Commission has recommended, with its liberal members for years now, is to make them weaker. That is what Judge Jackson has advocated. She also wants to change the guidelines—to make them weaker.

I think that is exactly the wrong move, and that is why the Senator was here to block this effort today. He doesn't want there to be tougher sentences. He doesn't want to talk about this issue. He wants to sweep it under the rug. I am here to say I won't let that happen. I will be here as long as it takes. I will be advocating for this in the Senate Judiciary Committee as long as it takes, until we get justice for the victims of child pornography and child exploitation.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:47 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. SINEMA).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

NOMINATION OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

Mr. COTTON. Madam President, the Senate will soon vote on the nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to be Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. I will vote against her nomination.

Judge Jackson may be a fine woman, but she is a dangerous judge. She built her career as a far-left activist, and it didn't change when she put on a robe 10 years ago. She personifies activism from the bench. She has crusaded to undermine criminal sentences, and she cannot be trusted to interpret the law or the Constitution as written.

Judge Jackson's record makes clear that her brief stint as a criminal defense attorney wasn't motivated merely by a devotion to equal representation of all. It was part of a deep commitment to leniency for criminals. Indeed, she has continued to act as a de facto lawyer for criminals from behind the bench as she did from in front of it.

Judge Jackson's average sentences for criminals are 34 percent lighter than the national average for criminal cases and 25 percent lighter than her own court's average, the DC District Court.

Disturbingly, some of the most sensational examples of her soft-on-crime attitudes are cases involving child pornographers. She has given more lenient sentences than recommended by the sentencing guidelines in every single child pornography case where the law allowed it—every single one, every time. Individuals sentenced by Judge Jackson for child pornography possession receive, on average, 57 percent lighter sentences compared to the national average. For child pornography distribution, the sentence is 47 percent lighter than the national average.

These aren't just numbers. These are predators, and they go on to commit more of the most heinous crimes imaginable because Judge Jackson lets them off so easy. In one case, Judge Jackson gave child pornographer Wesley Hawkins just 3 months—3 months—in prison when the sentencing guidelines recommended 8 to 10 years—3 months versus a recommended 8 to 10 years. Judge Jackson even gave him a sentence that was one-sixth as long as what her own probation office recommended. And a few years later, when Hawkins should have still been in prison for his original offense, he did something else that got him 6 more months in custody. That is twice as long as his original sentence.

When all 11 Republicans on the Judiciary Committee sent a letter asking for details of what happened to justify this new sentence, Judge Jackson refused to provide any further information—so much, I guess, for looking at her record, as she urged us to do.

Her leniency isn't limited to child pornographers, either. In 2017, Judge